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Identical letters dated 23 April 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, I wish to draw your attention to the following information:

On 22 April 2013, in an unprecedented contradiction of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and international custom, the Council of the European Union, meeting in its foreign affairs configuration, adopted a decision authorizing the States members of the Union to import oil and petroleum products, export key equipment and technology for the oil and gas industry and invest in the Syrian oil industry, under the pretext that this would help the civilian population and support the opposition in Syria. The European Union authorization applies strictly to the so-called opposition coalition, which represents no one.

It appears that the European Union, which is involved in the ongoing political and economic campaign against the national economy and the livelihoods of Syrian citizens, is not satisfied with the range of unilateral economic sanctions that it had adopted in its previous decisions. Instead, it has adopted a new measure that, from the perspective of international law, is contrary to the principle of non-intervention set out in Article II of the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of sovereignty and the right of peoples to choose their political and economic systems without foreign interference, and the declaration adopted by the General Assembly in 1962 entitled "Permanent sovereignty over natural resources", which provides that all States have the unrestricted right to dispose of their natural wealth and resources and calls for respect for the economic independence of States. This measure is also contrary to the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States, adopted by the General Assembly in 1981, which provides that a State has a duty to refrain from the promotion, encouragement or support, direct or indirect, of rebellious or secessionist activities within other States, under any pretext whatsoever, or any action which seeks to disrupt the unity or to undermine or subvert the political order of other States. It

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furthermore contradicts the Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, adopted by the General Assembly in 1970.

It is clear that the sanctions imposed by the European Union on Syria from the onset of the crisis are fundamentally illegal and unlawful. They will only exacerbate the suffering of the Syrian people at the hands of the armed terrorist groups that have been destroying the country's vital infrastructure and undermining its economic foundations, of which the oil sector is one of the most important.

Needless to say, neither the European Union nor any other group has the right to take measures aimed at infringing on the sovereign rights of States to dispose of their natural resources. Indeed, the States of the European Union have gone so far as to authorize the exploitation of those resources for the benefit of a group that has proclaimed that it is the opposition and represents the Syrian people, but it represents only its members, who have foreign connections, and their interests.

The illegal decision of the European Union is tantamount to an act of aggression, according to the definition of aggression adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 3314 (XXIX) of 1974. It amounts to participation in the plundering of resources that belong to the Syrian people and over which they exercise sovereignty, as is their right, through their existing, legitimate Government. Accordingly, the Syrian Arab Republic, which will exercise its natural right to take the measures required to defend its sovereignty and natural resources against any attempted piracy or robbery, calls on the Security Council to take the measures required to prevent the implementation of this unlawful decision, which is contrary to international law, the Charter of the United Nations and States' commitments. It further calls on the Council not to support terrorism by means of this European Union decision, which seeks to provide support to the armed terrorist groups associated with the Nusra Front, an arm of Al-Qaida that is conducting terrorist operations in Syria.

I should be grateful if this letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 105, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative